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# Draupadi: A Woman of Rare Love.

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Dedicated This Journal to My Lord Krishna (Godhead)



Image of God Krishna with his consort Smt. Radharani at Vaktivedanta Manor, (Iskcon Temple) London, England.

As among men Krishna baffles our understanding, so does Draupadi among women. And how the critics look at Draupadi says more about the critics themselves than about Draupadi. What we see in others is only a reflection; others only serve as mirrors to us. We see in others only that which we want to see; in fact, we see what we are. We do nothing but project ourselves on the world.

It is difficult to understand Draupadi. But our difficulty does not come from this great woman, it really emanates from us. Our ideas and beliefs, our desires and hopes come in our way of understanding Draupadi.

To love five men together, to play wife to them at the same time is a great and arduous task. This needs to be understood rightly. Love does not have much to do with persons; it is a state of mind. And love that is confined to a single person is a poor love. Let us go into this question of love in depth.

We all insist that one's love should be confined to a single person – a man or a woman. If someone loves you, you want that he should love you and you alone, that he not share his love with another person. You would like to possess that person, to monopolize him or her. We not only want to possess things, we also want to possess men and women. And if we had our way we would possess even the sun and the moon and the stars. So we crave to monopolize love. Because we do not know what love is, we are prone to think that if it is shared with many it will disperse and dwindle and die. But the truth is that the more love is shared, the more it grows. And when we try to restrict it, to control it – which is utterly unnatural and arbitrary – it dries up and eventually dies.

I am reminded of a beautiful story

A Buddhist nun had a statue of Buddha made of sandalwood. She loved the statue and always kept it with her. Being a nun she traveled from place to place, where she mostly stayed in Buddhist temples and monasteries. And wherever she lived she worshipped her own statue of Buddha.

Once she happened to be a guest at the famous temple of a thousand Buddha's. This temple was known for its thousand statues of Buddha; it was filled with statues and statues. The nun, as usual, sat for her evening worship, and she burned incense before her statue of Buddha. But with the passing breeze the perfume of the incense strayed to other statues of Buddhas which filled that temple.

The nun was distressed to see that while her own Buddha was deprived of the perfume, others had it in plenty. So she devised a funnel through which the smoke would ascend to her statue only. But this device, although successful, blackened the face of her Buddha and made it especially ugly. Of course the nun was exceedingly miserable, because it was a rare statue of sandalwood, and she loved it. She went to the chief priest of the temple and said, "My statue of Buddha has been ruined. What am I to do?"

The priest said, "Such an accident, such an ugliness is bound to happen whenever someone tries to block the movement of truth and possess it for oneself. Truth by its nature has to be everywhere; it cannot be personalized and possessed,"

Up to now, mankind has thought of love in terms of petty relationship – relationship between two persons. We have yet to know love that is a state of mind, and not just relationship. And this is what comes in our way of understanding Draupadi.



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